

they evidently roost in the day-time and obtain the food for the young ones. These latter, in their distinctive striped plumage, were in considerable numbers at the nests. Some were still sitting at the sides of the nests and others were perched on limbs nearby. Remains of jilgies (*Chaeraps quinquecarinatus*) were plentiful on the ground beneath the nests.

Mr. McLarty assured us that this was the first season that he had noticed the heronry, and the birds had not previously been seen in such great numbers on the river. The heronry is quite close to the house.

—T. M. SMITH, Coolup.

Wood-Sandpipers in Western Australia.—In *The Emu*, vol. 45, 1945, p. 170, Dr. D. L. Serventy discussed the status of Wood-Sandpipers (*Tringa glareola*) in Western Australia. He mentioned the specimen of this species he procured on my farm at Coolup in January, 1945 and referred to the apparent rarity of the species in Australia. Up till the time of taking this specimen I had never studied closely the flocks of sandpipers which made visits to my swamps during the summer months. I had taken for granted they were all the Sharp-tailed species (*Erolia acuminata*). Since then I have observed my Sandpipers more attentively with the result that I find the Wood-Sandpipers to be far from rare on these freshwater swamps. However though they are regular visitors they are not so common as the Sharp-tailed Sandpipers.

The Sharp-tailed Sandpiper is usually seen in flocks of twelve to fifty or more while the largest flock of Wood-Sandpipers I have seen consisted of six individuals. The latter are shyer birds and prefer to keep to themselves in secluded areas, and when flushed usually make height rapidly, giving their "giff-giff-giff" call and disappear. The Sharp-tails fly a short distance and settle down again. The Wood-Sandpipers appear slimmer, longer in the legs, and much quicker in their feeding habits. They may be recognised as they feed, without glasses, when one becomes familiar with their habits and on the wing are easily identified by the white rump and shrill call. With glasses they may be distinguished by the spotted appearance of the upper parts in contrast to the streaky appearance of the Sharp-tails.

In 1947 Wood-Sandpipers could be seen on my swamps at any time during January and February. On February 9, 1947 in company with Dr. D. L. Serventy and Mr. K. G. Buller, I visited the Cannington swamps and we observed two birds feeding around a small pool close to the roadside at Nicholson Road. This summer up to January 26, 1948, sandpipers have been rare at Coolup and most of those seen have been Wood-Sandpipers. On January 24, Dr. Serventy and myself observed seven birds—two Sharp-tails and five Wood-Sandpipers on one of the swamps. When flushed four of the Wood-Sandpipers, calling shrilly, rose steeply and disappeared and the other flew over to the opposite side of the pool. The Sharp-tails which had remained, now rose and flew silently over to the other side. When we followed them up the Wood-

Sandpiper flew off leaving the two Sharp-tails, thus providing a typical example of the behaviour of two species when flushed.

There is good reason to believe that other swamps in the south-west must harbour this species and so in the aggregate, the number visiting Western Australia may be considerable. They frequent the open, cleared swamps with grassy margins and the water level determines the time of arrival and departure. They first appear when the swamps are drying off and remain till they are dry, searching for food in the mud. In my case they arrive in January and depart towards the end of February.

In view of our experiences with the Wood-Sandpiper one must not lightly disregard the possibility of other species such as the Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*) occurring locally, but having been overlooked.

—ANGUS ROBINSON, Coolup.

Fledging Period of the Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike.—On September 28, 1947, at 0730 hours, at Caron, I located a nest of a Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike (*Corucina novae-hollandiae*), nine feet from the ground in a mallee (*Eucalyptus* sp.). The nest contained one egg, half an egg shell, and two naked young. On the following day there were three young in the nest. No egg shells were to be seen either in or under the nest. From October 12, I visited the nest at frequent intervals with a view to determining the brood period. To guard against driving the young from the nest prematurely, observations were made with binoculars from a distance of from fifteen to twenty-five yards.

I found all three young resting on the nest at 0745 hours on October 22, but when I visited the nest at 1715 hours, two fledgelings were sitting and one was standing on the nest. The following morning at 0800 hours, the three young were on the nest. However, at 1700 hours the nest was empty. Two of the young were still in the tree. One of these had probably flown to reach its perch. I could not locate the third bird. At 2130 hours an adult was covering at least one bird on the nest. At 0745 hours on October 24, one young bird was on the nest and one in another part of the nesting tree. Later at 1700 hours there was no trace of any of the birds and the following morning, after wind and rain, the empty nest was on the ground under the tree.

From the foregoing it will be seen that in this case, the fledging period was twenty-five days.

—ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Caron.

CORRECTION

In the last issue on p. 62, line 10 of the second paragraph, the brackets around the words "the Cape Tulips" should have been commas. The Cape Tulips are two species of *Homeria*, not *Oxalis* as inferred by the presence of the brackets.